

## STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Recognize elements of a comparison-contrast essay
- Write a comparison-contrast essay

## RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

You will need photocopies for students of:

- **Student Lesson Summary**, p. 297
- **Teaching Model**, p. 299
- **Templates 1, 2, and 3**, pp. 300–302
- **Guidelines for Peer Response**, p. 303
- **Rubric**, p. 305

## Teach

- 1. Introducing Comparison-Contrast Essay:** Explain to students that a comparison-contrast essay explores the similarities and differences between two subjects.
  - Ask students where they would be likely to find comparison-contrast essays. (*Sample: In reviews for movies, books, cars, or other products or services*)
  - Ask students if anyone has ever asked them to recommend one product, service, or activity over another, or if they have been asked for advice about which of two actions to take. How would they respond to these requests in writing?
- 2. Teaching Comparison-Contrast Essay:** Ask students to brainstorm the steps involved in prewriting and drafting a comparison-contrast essay. List their ideas on the board. Distribute the **Student Lesson Summary** and review the **Here's How** strategies.
  - Distribute **Template 1** and draw it on the board. Have students suggest two objects they can compare, and label them in the diagram. Have them list similarities and differences of the objects, and put the information in the diagram.
  - Next, explain that there are two ways to organize a comparison-contrast essay: a subject-by-subject pattern and a point-by-point pattern. In a subject-by-subject pattern, the writer discusses all the points of one subject first, then all the points of the other. In a point-by-point pattern, the writer compares and contrasts one point at a time for both subjects. Distribute **Template 2** and **Template 3** and guide students through the organizational pattern of each one.
- 3. Guided Practice for Prewriting and Drafting a Comparison-Contrast Essay:** Distribute the **Teaching Model**. Have students read the comparison-contrast essay. Tell students they will recognize several of the **Here's How** strategies and they should pay attention to the bold text and notes. Draw **Template 3** on the board. Lead a discussion, using the following points and filling in the diagram on the board.
  - **Choosing a Subject:** Ask: What are the subjects being compared? (*Soccer and football*) Fill in the box on the board.
  - **Writing a Thesis Statement:** Ask: What is the thesis statement? Does it summarize the similarities and differences? (*Sample: The thesis statement is: "The soccer team would be a fun, familiar experience, while playing football"*)

## COMPARISON-CONTRAST ESSAY , CONTINUED

would mean learning a new game and meeting new people.” It does summarize the similarities and differences.) Fill in the box on the board.

- **Organizing the Essay:** Ask: What organizational pattern does the writer use? (*Sample: The writer uses a point-by-point pattern, rather than subject-by-subject pattern. He begins with points of similarity, then moves on to points of difference.*)
- **Finding Similarities and Differences:** The “First Point” box represents similarities. Ask: What similarities does the writer find between football and soccer? (*Sample: Both are fun, require teamwork, require physical energy, involve using muscles and keeping the body healthy, involve using the mind to plan ahead and make decisions.*) Fill in the “Subject 1” column for soccer and the “Subject 2” column for football. The “Second Point” box represents differences. Ask: What differences does the writer find between football and soccer? (*Sample: The writer knows the rules, plays, and footwork of soccer; whereas in football he would have to learn new plays and new rules; writer knows soccer teammates and coaches, whereas in football he would meet new people; writer knows he can be good at soccer, whereas football would challenge him to be good at another sport.*) Fill in “Subject 1” column for soccer and “Subject 2” column for football.
- **Collecting Evidence:** Ask: What details support the thesis? (*Sample: In this case, similarities and differences in the diagram are enough to support the thesis.*)
- **Transitioning:** Ask: What transitions does the writer use to clarify the relationships between ideas? What relationships do the transitions show? (*Sample: The writer uses “both” in the second paragraph, “on the one hand” and “on the other hand” in the third paragraph, and “however” in the fourth paragraph. “Both” shows similarity, and the others show difference.*)

**4. Guided Practice for Revising and Editing a Comparison-Contrast Essay:** Lead a discussion of the revising and editing strategies using the following points.

- **Writing an Engaging Introduction:** Ask: How does the writer create an engaging introduction? What could you do to make the introduction even more engaging? (*Sample: The writer tantalizes readers with a vague reference to “a choice” in the first sentence. The introduction might be made more engaging by shortening the descriptions of the writer’s accomplishments.*)
- **Being Specific:** Ask: Does the writer use any vague terms? (*Sample: No.*)
- **Connecting Ideas Clearly:** Ask: Does the writer use enough transitions? If not, where would you add transitions? (*Sample: Yes.*)
- **Concluding with a Powerful Impression:** Ask: Does the conclusion clarify the main ideas and show the reader a new way of thinking about them? How could the conclusion be improved? (*Sample: The conclusion summarizes the writer’s thoughts about soccer and football and shows readers that he based his decision on “learning as much as [he] can.” The conclusion could have benefited from more discussion about why learning about football is important.*)

**QUICK CHECK.** Draw **Template 2** on the board. Have students suggest two subjects they can compare, and label them in the diagram. Have them fill in the boxes in the diagram.

### Practice and Apply

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Assign students a 5- to 8-paragraph comparison-contrast essay to write for homework, using Template 2 or 3.

- **Templates 2 and 3** are to help students organize their essays.
- **Guidelines for Peer Response** is an in-class activity.
- **Rubric** should be used to evaluate essays.

### Answer Key: Templates

*Students should fill out the template to generate ideas for their essay and help them organize and prepare it. Answers should indicate that students understand the subject-by-subject and point-by-point essay patterns.*